1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Uru *warige* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group.

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so.

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days.

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people.

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist.

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants,

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Sambu deer (*Cervus Aristotelis*).